

ATARI DEALER NEWS

#8

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SUMMERTIME PROMOTIONS

As if the Summer wasn't hot enough, Atari has launched three computer promotions designed to make things even hotter for dealers.

For the 520ST, we are offering a free monochrome monitor when you purchase a 520ST cpu and one SF354 disk drive. We expect to see a variety of promotions based on this one. A complete monochrome system for \$499 is one good attraction, as is the 520ST for \$199 with purchase of drive and monitor. Some dealers who have launched this kind of promotion have experienced fantastic results. This special is good for units ordered from Atari by June 30 for delivery by July 15. This special must be advertised before July 31 to qualify.

For the 8-bit computers we have two promotions. We have added some software to spice up the 65XE package. The position of this promotion is as an advanced game machine, and we are bundling 4 software cartridges and a joystick with the 65XE CPU. The packages are: Star Raiders, Pac Man, Donkey Kong, and Sky Writer. This is an \$85 value of free products with an under-\$100 computer! We expect this to be a great attraction as the video game market heats up again this year, and this package is in place on products ordered during June for delivery any time until December 15, 1986. Why buy just a video game when for the same price you can get a computer with great video games?

The second 8-bit promotion is our continuing 130XE package deal. Get a 130XE with a disk drive and a printer, plus the AtariWriter Plus word processing program and four other software titles (Music Composer, Star Raiders, Defender, and Home Filing Manager), for only \$399. A version of this package with the 65XE in place of the 130XE is also available at a \$349 list price. This will be very attractive at back to school time.

We have a great opportunity now with Commodore increasing prices on both the Amiga and the Commodore 64 lines. Take advantage of it!

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CES REPORT: Atari Sparking PC Comeback

Atari's leadership in the comeback for personal computers was apparent than at the recent Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. Although computer products were in a section of the show floor that is not exactly prime territory, Atari's booth attracted huge crowds throughout the show. The feeling was more upbeat than it has been for several years. There were more exhibitors and attendees than in the past few CE Shows. A strong sign of Atari's role in the comeback was the presense of Atari computers in virtually every booth in the computer section.

Atari had the biggest and most prominent booth in the computer section. The entrance was flanked by two special displays: "See the Power of Atari" featuring video digitizers, and "Hear the Power of Atari" with music synthesizers. These exhibits were divided evenly into 8-bit and ST products.

Within the booth 36 tables were set aside for third party software developers. Again, half the displays were for XE products and the other half were for ST. Atari was careful to emphasize both sides of our computer product lines in a show of overall strength and support. Despite the predominance of publicity for the ST line, the XE computers are still alive and doing well.

The move toward added presence of the 8-bit products proved to be well timed, thanks to Atari's biggest competitor in this market. Commodore was present in only a small way, with a room tucked far away from the main floor. A few visitors were able to see company personnel trying to generate some enthusiasm for their latest attempt to generate corporate revenue -- the "64C" computer. This repackaging of the venerable Commodore 64 managed to add little in the way of utility, simply adding a new disk of software along with a new case design. For this they have raised the suggested price to \$200.

There did seem to be some enthusiasm among mass merchants, all right. Most of them paid quick visits to the Atari booth to talk business. It looks like Commodore is trying to replace the 64 with the XE. Thanks, guys!

Back to the Atari world, many of the software vendors at CES had new announcements of products. Batteries Included has announced a wide range of ST titles in the productivity category, including Thunder!, their realtime spelling checker; I*S Talk, a terminal program with a slew of features (also including spelling checker); DEGAS Elite, an enhanced version of their top-selling title; PaperClip Elite, an advanced word processor; HomePack ST, an enhanced version of their 8-bit best seller; and more, bringing their product line to an even dozen ST titles by year's end. MicroProse had Silas Warner, the author of many top-selling computer games like Castle Wolfenstein and Robotwars, demonstrating a beautiful version of his new Silent Service for the ST. Baudville, Epyx, Firebird, and Strategic Simulations were some of the software companies showing ST titles for the first time in their booths. Many other vendors announced expanded support of all Atari products at the show (or immediately after).

Atari was also helped by two user groups in the area, the Chicagoland Atari User Group (CLAUG) and the Suburban Chicago Atarians (SCAT). A word of advice to dealers -- don't underestimate the ability of user groups in your area! They have often shown they are willing and able to come to the aid of Atarians. Atari is proud to have such a devoted collection of users. Thanks, folks!

ST MONITOR CABLES AND CONNECTORS AVAILABLE

A small company in the Pittsburgh area is now selling ST monitor cables and connectors. Many customers have asked us for these cables for connecting 520ST's (with modulators) to video cassette recorders. Now it is possible.

You can get just the connectors for wiring your own cables, or you can buy cables with RCA plugs or with ST monitor plugs (for use as replacements or for longer cables), or they will make special customized cables for you. Contact At Your Service, 2856 Leechburg Road, Lower Burrell, PA 15068, Attn: Mark Spires, or call 412-335-4477.

LATEST SOFTWARE TITLES FROM ATARI CORP.

The newest release from Atari this month is DB Master One, an enhanced and improved version from the one given away as part of a promotion last Christmas. To re-introduce this product to you we are sending a copy to each of our dealers, absolutely free. Try it out, show it to your customers -- we think you'll be impressed. This package is available now in inventory from Atari.

Brand new in Atari's line of products is dbMan, the database from Versasoft. Atari has picked up the marketing rights to this product. It is available for immediate shipment. Just to refresh you, this package is a dBase III clone with many extra features. Later in this issue we talk about some of the ways we're using databases in our own operations here at Atari headquarters.

For the 8-bit computers, we want to remind you that the Atari Planetarium and Star Raiders II are also available in current inventory. Both of these titles have been very well received at the recent CES and Comdex shows, as well as in favorable reviews in upcoming issues of computer magazines.

NEW SOFTWARE PRODUCTS ANNOUNCED BY THIRD PARTIES

Aside from the flood of announcements at Comdex and CES, many other companies have jumped on the Atari bandwagon lately. It's nice to have momentum!

Baudville Inc. has three new titles of home and educational software: Video Vegas (blackjack, poker, slots, and keno), Guitar Wizard (teaches guitar playing), and Tes Bear's Rainy Day Games for young people. These products are available for the 8-bit Atari computers. Their phone number is 616-957-3036.

Epyx has released new products for the 8-bit and the ST lines. World Karate Championship for the 8-bit is a realistic graphic animation of the martial arts. For the ST, Epyx is shipping Rogue and their revamped Temple of Apshai Trilogy. Epyx plans to release Winter Games, World Games, Super Cycle, and Championship Wrestling for the ST series as well.

Polarware/Penguin Software has released Oo-Topos for the ST. Polarware has drastically cut prices on their software titles to make them even more attractive to the public -- currently they are selling most games at a \$19.95 list price.

Strategic Simulations (SSI) has released Gettysburg: The Turning Point for

the 8-bit Atari computers. At CES they were showing off preliminary versions of Phantasie for the ST, scheduled for release in late Summer.

For the 8-bit products, Batteries Included is shipping Paper Clip with Spell Check, a word processor with integrated dictionary.

ST SOFTWARE: THE LATEST IN DESK ACCESSORIES

The latest highlights in the ST software world are some very powerful desk accessories. These programs stay resident in memory and provide features that can be used at any time by programs which take advantage of the GEM environment.

From Michtron, we have Cornerman. This program is much more powerful than the acclaimed Sidekick package for the PC. It includes features like: a full ASCII chart in a scrolling window; a calculator with decimal, hex, binary, and octal functions; a note pad; a phone dialer; a clock (which appears in the upper right corner of any GEM screen); and many more. Cornerman is probably most suited for a 1040ST, since it uses up quite a bit of RAM, but it has quickly found itself to be indispensable in my ST.

A recent arrival here will probably give Cornerman a run for its money. Macro Manager from Blue Moon Software (distributed by Shanner International) is a very complete accessory. It's calculator works in algebraic or reverse polish notation and also includes financial functions. It also contains a weekly planner with project time reporting; electronic card file database; alarm clock calendar; and an electronic typewriter feature.

One of the most necessary products is the latest from Batteries Included, called Thunder (a poke at Turbo Lightning?). Thunder is a realtime spelling checker for GEM applications. While you are typing, it checks your spelling and rings the bell if you make an error. By clicking on the desk accessory menu, it will tell you what word was wrong and offers you a choice of corrections. Thunder comes with a 50,000 word dictionary. It is expandable to 2 more dictionaries, one with supplemental words and the other with replacement words -- you give it a word and an automatic replacement, for words you commonly misspell and for abbreviations which are automatically expanded for you.

MORE THAN 200 FREE ST PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Did you know that there are more than 200 public domain programs for the ST available from a central source, not to mention the more than 100 ST pictures and 100 8-bit programs? If you were signing into the Atari Corp. BBS regularly, you'd know this and a lot more. The Atari Base is the official BBS of Atari Corp. located at headquarters in Sunnyvale. You can also get any questions you have answered by our staff experts. There is a private section for dealers and for service centers as well.

Speaking of service centers, Randy Hain, Atari's manager of service, will be getting active in the Atari BBS as well to provide up-to-the-minute information to registered service centers. So make sure you're tuned in to Atari's own information exchange.

The Atari Base BBS can be reached by any computer with modem by calling 408-745-5308, any time any day, 300 or 1200 baud.

EASY DRAW OFFER EXTENDED

Along with this newsletter you will find the usual assortment of flyers from software vendors. Among them is a special offer from Migraph to buy their Easy Draw program at a special price. Due to a delay in getting their flyer in the mail to you, they have offered to extend the offer until July 11. Take a look at the Easy Draw demo disk which they've also sent, we think you'll be impressed. This demo is a full working version of Easy Draw, minus the SAVE function. And feel free to hand out copies of this demo, too.

ST APPLICATIONS NOTE: DATABASE MANAGEMENT

One of the strongest uses for a computer is to manage your data. Recently there have been several strong software titles for the Atari ST computers in this category. Two of these, DB Master One and dbMan, have found their way into many different departments here at Atari. We thought we'd share our experiences.

Sam Tramiel's secretary uses DB Master One to manage his business cards. As the president of Atari, Sam meets a multitude of people. Rather than deal with an unweildy pile of cards, he has them typed into this program. When he needs to contact someone, the information is available almost instantly. This particular ST is equipped with a monochrome monitor to take advantage of the very high resolution, displaying 50 lines of information on the screen at a time.

In the service department, Randy Hain also uses DB Master One. He keeps track of service centers and applicants. He has created many custom report formats for his own use and for use by others in the company. For example, when the customer relations department asked for a list of all service centers with complete addresses so customers can be referred to them, he quickly changed one of the existing reports to create the customized one that was needed.

Both of these departments started using DB Master One with its original release last Winter. Since then, they passed reports of problems and requests for additional features back to the program's designers. Most of their requests were implemented in the latest release which has just become available to you.

For more sophisticated data management tasks, we are making extensive use of dbMan. With the features of dBase III, we have drawn on the experience of people in the company to create very complete applications.

The customer relations department is using the ST for order processing. They process a tremendous number of requests for manuals, spare parts, and other items. Instead of typing and filing and manual report generation, the entire process of order entry and reporting is automated. The inventory items and their descriptions are in one file, open orders are in another, and sales tax for the state in a third. Orders go through the system faster and more accurately than ever. Because dbMan is a true relational database, more files can be added as the department learns how this program can help them even more. We don't just start with the solution, it grows as we think of more ways it can help us.

Likewise, the finance department uses dbMan to store and track outstanding loaner systems to members of the press and others. Each system can be tracked so we always know what our outstanding inventory is, which machines are overdue, and who within Atari is responsible for each computer sent. This information was impossible to maintain with the older manual system.

As time goes by we are finding more and more ST's cropping up within our own company. Along with the applications mentioned here already, we find them used by secretaries for word processing, by the controller and other finance people as spreadsheets, by the data processing department as terminals, and of course by the programmers as development tools. It may seem obvious that Atari would use its own computers, but there were once many IBM PC's and DisplayWriters and Wang systems here to do the same jobs that are now being done better by our own inexpensive ST systems. Our Chairman makes us all work our hardest and save every penny we can -- the ST is part of the way we do our jobs.

HIPPOPOTAMUS DEVELOPS HP LASERJET INTERFACE

Concluding this issue of the Atari Dealer News, we thought we'd reproduce a screen dump from the ST that the Hippopotamus Software folks were kind enough to provide to us at Comdex. They plan to release the finished interface within the next few months -- you'll know it's out when you see this newsletter printed in this kind of quality!

